

DISTRICT COURT (FIFTH DISTRICT : BEAVER COUNTY) [1683]

NATURALIZATION RECORD BOOKS, 1896-1940.

3 microfilm reels (5 vols.)

DESCRIPTION: To become a citizen of the United States, an individual normally filed a "declaration of intention to become a citizen" at least two years prior to applying for citizenship. The next step was the naturalization hearing at which the candidate and witnesses either made oral statements or filed written petitions and affidavits attesting to the applicant's character, worthiness to become a citizen, and the validity of statements made to the court. If the judge found the applicant eligible to become a citizen, an oath was administered and the individual renounced his former citizenship. At this point a certificate of citizenship was issued documenting the fact. These volumes contain standardized certificates of citizenship and any supporting petitions or documentation required.

The first two volumes contain similarly worded certificates recording the applicant's compliance with the procedures. The first volume is for those applicants who entered the country as adults; the second for those who entered as minors. Those who entered as minors were not required to have actually filed declarations of intention to become citizens. The applicant's name and current nationality were noted. The applicant swore that he had filed his intention to become a citizen. Two U.S. citizens testified that the applicant had resided in the territory for a year and in the United States for five years. They further swore that he was of good moral character and attached to the principles of the U.S. Constitution. The applicant then took an oath to support the U.S. Constitution and renounced allegiance to any foreign sovereign, and particularly to the ruler whose subject he had been. There are a couple entries from 1920 and 1933 which were mistakenly entered in the second volume; the word "obsolete" is written over them. In later volumes, minors and adults used the same forms, with information inserted or stricken as necessary to clarify.

By 1904 preprinted application forms had been introduced. These consisted of an applicant's

affidavit and witness affidavits, as well as a certificate of citizenship. The applicant's affidavit gave his name, birthplace, court and date of declaration of intention, sovereign, and date of admission to the United States. The affidavit included an oath of renunciation of allegiance to his former sovereign and a declaration that the applicant is not insane, epileptic, a pauper, beggar, contagious, a felon, guilty of moral turpitude, a polygamist, anarchist, or pimp. The affidavits of two witnesses confirmed the applicant's statements and declared his worthiness to become a citizen. A copy of a certificate of citizenship form was then completed reiterating this information and ordering his admittance as a citizen.

After 1906, courts were required to use preprinted forms in volumes furnished by the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization of the Department of Commerce and Labor (later the Naturalization Service of the U.S. Dept. of Labor). Each volume was to be indexed and the petitions numbered consecutively beginning with number 1 in volume 1. A duplicate copy was to be sent to the Bureau of Naturalization. The petitions include the individual's name, residence, occupation, birthdate, and birthplace; the place from which he emigrated, the date, port of arrival, and vessel name; the date on which he declared his intention of becoming a citizen and the name of the court involved; his wife's name, birthplace, and residence; his children's names, birthdates, birthplaces, and residences; and any previous petitions filed. The applicant was also required to take an oath that he was not an anarchist or a polygamist and to renounce his former sovereign. An applicant had to be able to speak English and have resided continuously in the United States for five years and in the state for one year. Also included on the petition form were the affidavit of two citizen witnesses who validated the individual's petition information and declared that he was of good moral character. The printed oath of allegiance and court order admitting the petitioner to citizenship are also included. Later space was added for memoranda of continuances in the proceedings, names of substitute witnesses, and space to record the denial, not just the acceptance, of the petition.

In 1941, the Immigration and Naturalization Service was moved to the U.S. Department of Justice. They also began limiting the number of courts hearing citizenship applications, and residents from Beaver county were henceforth to file in either Iron or Juab county district courts.

ARRANGEMENT: Volumes and entries are chronological by filing date. However the first pair of volumes are divided into one volume which records those who entered the U.S. as adults, and the other those who entered as minors.

RELATED RECORDS: For Declarations of intention to become a citizen filed in the Fifth District Court in and for Beaver County by some whose certificates are in this series, consult series 85176, DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION RECORD BOOK. The MINUTE BOOKS, series 3194, for the the 5th District Court-Beaver will also include discussion of these naturalization hearings. CITIZENSHIP CERTIFICATE STUBS, series 24079, constitute a receipt or memorandum of the certificates issued.

Some declarations of intention for those whose naturalization papers are filed here may have been recorded in other series. Before 1906, Beaver County residents could have filed papers in any court in the country. Consult the series catalog for specific series. In particular, except for a brief period in 1859, Beaver County was in the Second District Court, so the DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION RECORD BOOKS, series 85174, and CERTIFICATES OF CITIZENSHIP RECORD BOOKS, series 85175, for that court are the most likely to contain records of Beaver County residents prior to statehood.

After 1940, the naturalization records for Beaver County residents may appear in the NATURALIZATION RECORD BOOKS of Juab County, series 85178.

For other possible sources consult the Research Guide to Naturalization .

PROCESSING NOTE: The first two volumes were microfilmed in 1966 by the LDS Genealogical Society. Archival processing by A.C. Cone was completed in 1989. The inventory was updated after additional volumes were located and microfilmed in 2002.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description
1	1896, Feb 24-1902, Jun 5 (Adult entrants)
1	1896, May 27-1900, May 10 (Minor entrants)
2	1904, Jan 27-1906, Oct 9
3	1907, Apr 23-1928, Nov 8 (#1-#37)
3	1932, Nov 2-1940, Jul 5 (#38-#44)